Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) An apparatus for the formation of a head on a beverage contained in a vessel, including an ultrasonic oscillator for generating an electric signal having an ultrasonic frequency, a transducer connected to the oscillator for converting the electrical signal into a physical ultrasonic excitation, a platform including a recess portion that at least corresponds in area to a base of the vessel intended for use and has a contact surface coupled to the transducer[[,]] and onto which the vessel containing the beverage is placed in use, ~~wherein means is provided for maintaining~~ and means for controlling a supply of water to the recessed portion of the platform to maintain a hydrated layer on the contact surface substantially throughout a period of use.

2. (Original) The apparatus of claim 1 wherein means for maintaining the hydrated layer includes a hydrophilic material.

3. (Original) The apparatus of claim 2 wherein the hydrophilic material is Hydrogel.

4. (Original) The apparatus of claim 3 wherein the Hydrogel is substantially 1 to 2mm thick and includes a surface area substantially corresponding to a base of the vessel containing the beverage placed thereon, in use.

5. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 2 wherein the hydrated layer includes an antifungal or antibacterial agent.

6. (Currently Amended) [[The]] An apparatus ~~according to claim 1 wherein~~ for the formation of a head on a beverage contained in a vessel, including an ultrasonic oscillator for generating an electric signal having an ultrasonic frequency, a transducer connected to the oscillator for converting the electrical signal into a physical ultrasonic excitation, a contact surface coupled to the transducer and onto which the vessel containing the beverage is placed in use, and means for maintaining a hydrated layer on the contact surface substantially throughout a period of use and including a refrigeration circuit that is arranged to pass by adjacent the contact surface.

7. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 6 wherein the contact surface has a chamber therebelow including [[an]] input and output [[end]] ends for coupling with the refrigeration circuit to allow refrigerant to pass therethrough.

8-10. (Cancelled)

11. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim [[8]] 1 wherein an aperture is provided in the platform.

12. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 11 wherein the means for controlling the supply of water supplies a measured amount of water to the platform through the aperture.

13. (Original) The apparatus of claim 12 wherein the measured amount is 1 to 5 millilitres.

14. (Currently Amended) The apparatus according to claim [[8]] 1 wherein a reservoir is provided to supply water to the platform.

15. (Currently Amended) The apparatus according to claim [[8]] 1 wherein a main water supply is coupled to the apparatus for delivery to the platform.

16. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 14 ~~wherein~~ further including a wick means ~~is provided~~ between the reservoir and the platform.

17. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the apparatus is activated by simultaneously closing two switches, one of these switches associated with the means for ~~maintaining the hydrated layer~~ controlling the supply of water.

18-20. (Cancelled)

21. (Currently Amended) Apparatus for forming a head of froth on a beverage contained in a vessel comprising an ultrasonic oscillator for generating an electrical signal having a variable ultrasonic frequency, a transducer connected to the oscillator for converting the electrical signal into a physical ultrasonic excitation, a surface coupled to the transducer, on to which the vessel is placed in use to be subjected to the ultrasonic excitation for a predetermined application time, and a control means such that, during the predetermined application time, the frequency of the electrical signal is varied such that the vessel and beverage are subjected to a range of ultrasonic frequencies and wherein the control means monitors for maximum resonance of the beverage and vessel by measuring the power being drawn by the transducer.

22. (Cancelled)

23. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim [[22]] 21 wherein the control means substantially maintains the maximum resonant frequency for the remainder of the application time.

24. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 21 wherein the control means pulses the electrical signal for a plurality of predetermined times.

25. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 21 where the predetermined application time is up to 5 seconds.

26. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 21 substantially in the form of a bar top beer pump.